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LB 536

with the Legislature being collectively the sucker, giving money to an industry which cannot make it on its own. I think it is a waste of our time to spend trying to placate investors, producers, purveyors of ethanol. We have a primary responsibility to the citizens of this state. If ethanol production is a viable industry, let them make it on their own. I have heard Senator Coord...I mean Senator Dierks mention that these plants are profitable at this point. I'd like to ask Senator Dierks a question so I won't misstate.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Senator Dierks.

SENATOR DIERKS: Yes.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Senator Dierks, have you said at one point or another during our discussion on this bill that these existing ethanol plants are turning a profit?

SENATOR DIERKS: I did say that.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Are they making enough profit to exist without any additional state subsidy? We cannot touch the federal subsidy. If we withdraw the existing state subsidies can those plants continue to turn a profit?

SENATOR DIERKS: Those plants that are turning the profit now I don't think are getting much of a state subsidy. They may be getting 7.5 cents, but the major...the major part of the bill goes to production of new plants.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Well, I'm asking about...though we'll get to the new ones under this bill, I want to deal with those right now that are getting that 7.5 cents.

SENATOR DIERKS: Okay.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: If we take away that 7.5 cents will they continue to be profitable?

SENATOR DIERKS: You know, I don't know that.